a2 Region 161-167,

Region 280-288,

Region 448-455, and

Region 468-475;

wherein (a) the alteration(s) are independently

(i) an insertion of an amino acid downstream of the amino acid which occupies the position,

(ii) a deletion of the amino acid which occupies the position, or

(iii) a substitution of the amino acid which occupies the position with a different amino acid,

(b) the variant has alpha-amylase activity and (c) each region or position corresponds to a region position of the amino acid sequence of the parent Fungamyl-like alpha-amylase having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

32. The variant of claim 31, wherein the variant includes the following substitution: Q153S.

33. The variant of claim 31, wherein the variant has improved thermostability and/or increased stability at acidic pH.

34. A DNA construct comprising a DNA sequence encoding the variant of claim 31.

35. A recombinant expression vector comprising a DNA construct according to claim 34.

36. A cell which is transformed with a DNA construct according to claim 34.

37. A cell according to claim 36, wherein the cell is a microorganism.

38. The cell according to claim 37, wherein the cell is a protease deficient strain of *Aspergillus*.

39. A composition for producing high maltose syrup comprising the variant of claim 31.

a2 40. A dough improving composition, comprising the variant of claim 31.

41. A brewing composition, comprising the variant of claim 31.

42. The brewing composition of claim 41, further comprising at least one enzyme selected from the group consisting of beta-amylase and isoamylase enzymes.

43. A composition for producing alcohol, comprising the variant of claim 31.

44. A process of liquefying starch, wherein the variant of claim 31 is used for treating starch.

45. A process of producing high maltose syrups, wherein the variant of claim 31 is used for liquefying starch.

46. A brewing process, wherein the variant of claim 31 is added during fermentation of wort.

47. An alcohol production process, wherein the variant of claim 31 is used for liquefying starch .

48. The variant of claim 31 wherein said variant is immobilized.

49. A method for generating an alpha-amylase variant of a parent Fungamyl-like alpha-amylase, which variant has increased thermostability relative to the parent, the method comprising:

(a) subjecting a DNA sequence encoding the parent Fungamyl-like alpha-amylase to random mutagenesis,

(b) expressing the mutated DNA sequence obtained in step (a) in a host cell, and

(c) screening for host cells expressing a mutated alpha-amylase which has improved thermostability at acidic pH relative to the parent Fungamyl-like alpha-amylase.